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June 12, 1959

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By	11/27/85 NARA Date 1920

To: The Acting Secretary

Through: S/S

From: EUR - Foy D. Kohler

Subject: Significant points in Geneva memoranda of conversations

The following points contained in the Geneva memoranda of conversations and not reported telegraphically may be of interest:

Troops in Berlin and Access Problem. In the after dinner conversation May 30 Gromyko went farthest in discounting the military significance of Western troops in Berlin. He said that from a Soviet military point of view the more troops we had in Berlin the better, but that they did not like to see this (presumably because of the political effect of the troops' presence.) At the June 3 private meeting Gromyko disputed the Western contention that relinquishing our right to increase the number of troops in Berlin constituted a concession and said "opinions differed" on our right to make increases. Gromyko said the West had previously talked about symbolic reduction of troops and now spoke of symbolic troops; the Soviets were talking about a "symbolic presence".

In the private meeting June 3, as part of the effort to elicit from Gromyko what arrangements concerning access the Soviets had in mind, the Secretary suggested that one alternative would be to have the Germans at the check point responsible to the Four Powers. Gromyko flatly rejected this as infringing GDR sovereignty.

At the June 4 afternoon meeting Gromyko pressed for Western objections to neutral troops and Lloyd said we feared they would not remain there indefinitely and would not inspire the same degree of confidence in West Berlin as Western troops.

At the June 4 evening meeting Gromyko, in reply to a direct question from the Secretary, said the Soviets

did consider

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did consider that legal rights expire with the passage of time. Later, he referred to Soviet "past obligations" in a discussion of access procedures. Gromyko turned aside a hypothetical question as to what the Soviets would reply should the Western governments declare, concurrently with an agreement, that the Soviets had acknowledged that we were legally in Berlin and had not disputed our rights of presence and access there.

Subversive and propaganda activities in Berlin. The Secretary made a lengthy statement at the private meeting June 1 regarding subversive and hostile propaganda activities from East Berlin, similar to his subsequent statement to the plenary session. Gromyko appeared taken aback, making a remark to the effect that a good offense is the best defense. He said that both East and West Berlin should assume certain obligations not to do things to increase tensions. At the June 3 private meeting Gromyko referred to a GDR declaration which he said would obligate the GDR to cease propaganda and subversive activities which intensified tensions. He promised to inform the Ministers of the date of the declaration. At the afternoon private meeting June 4 Gromyko pointed out that the GDR declaration was made in connection with the proposal for a "free city" and indicated that it would be valid only if there were agreement on the status of West Berlin. He pressed at this meeting for a more detailed spell-out of point three of the Western paper. He did not provide the date of the GDR declaration nor any details concerning its contents.

Summit Conference. The Secretary told two newsmen May 30 that he saw some value in a series of Summit conferences which might thus discount the "momentous" expectations now attending such meetings.

A member of the Soviet delegation (Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in Paris) told a member of the French delegation in private conversation that the Foreign Ministers should not attempt to set an agenda for a Summit meeting but that this should be left to the Heads of Government.

Conference procedure. Gromyko in after dinner conversation May 30 mentioned as topics for possible discussion later: (1) disarmament; (2) a zone (presumably an atom-

free zone)

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free zone); (3) a non-aggression pact. He mentioned a commission but Pervukhin and Soldatov muttered "no" in Russian; possibly the Soviets were considering their June 9 proposal for an all-German commission at the time.

Refugees in Berlin. In the June 1 private meeting Lloyd remarked that the question of refugees had not been but could be discussed. Gromyko made no comment on the remark at any time during the meeting or in any subsequent private meeting. At the June 2 meeting of the Co-ordinating Group Grewe noted the danger of discussing the refugee question and the group agreed but said the matter would have to be given consideration if Gromyko probed it.

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